

REQUEST FOR INITIAL GRANT PROPOSALS (RFIP)
Smart Growth Leadership Summit (USEPA-AO-OPEI-05-03)

OVERVIEW INFORMATION

FEDERAL AGENCY NAME: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA); Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation (OPEI); Development, Community and Environment Division (DCED).

FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY TITLE: Smart Growth Leadership Summit Request for Initial Proposals (RFIP)

ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE: This is an initial announcement of a funding opportunity.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER: USEPA-AO-OPEI-05-03

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NUMBER: 66.611, Environmental Policy and Innovation Grants, authorized under Delegation of Authority I-47.

DATES: Initial proposals must be submitted to U.S. EPA by Monday, June 27, 2005, 5:00 PM Eastern Standard Time. Award announcements are expected to be made early fall 2005. [Submission date modified as of May 12, 2005.]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The U.S. EPA is seeking proposals from eligible organizations to develop and convene a prominent annual summit for key public officials and civic or private sector leaders who are noted pioneers in implementing the principles of smart growth. The summit is intended to draw together local, regional, and/or state officials and other individuals who are widely acknowledged for their leadership in smart growth. This event will provide an opportunity for these leaders to exchange ideas about minimizing environmental impacts of development through innovative initiatives, to meet with national smart growth experts that they may not have access to otherwise, and to learn about local, state and federal sources of funding that may be available to support their further implementation of the principles of smart growth. The U.S. EPA expects to award one assistance agreement under this solicitation. The Agency expects to have approximately \$20,000 available for first year funding, with a ceiling of \$120,000 for the life of the agreement. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit proposals for first year activities of \$20,000 or less; first year activities should include actual planning and convening of a summit. A final agreement may be negotiated for up to five (5) years, allowing for annual incremental funding of follow-up summits and activities. No multi-year proposals should be for more than \$20,000 in the first year or less than \$105,000 over the life of the project. Funding for future years will depend upon the availability of funds, EPA priorities, and recipient performance. The award will be made as a cooperative agreement, which entails substantive involvement by EPA. This will include working in partnership with the recipient to develop summit agendas, materials, and follow-up activities.

Eligible applicants include (1) Incorporated nonprofit (or not-for-profit) agencies, institutions, and organizations incorporated or domiciled in the United States, (2) public (tribal, state, county, regional or local) agencies, institutions and organizations, and (3) individuals. Individuals must demonstrate the same level of competence and meet the same requirements as any other eligible applicant. Nonprofit organizations described in section 501 (c) (4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply. For profit organizations also are not eligible to apply.

There are no match or cost-sharing requirements. However, the degree to which the project budget effectively uses EPA funds and leverages matching funds will be considered as evaluation criteria. Matching funds can include cash or in-kind contributions. Only one application will be accepted per applicant.

Initial proposals must be submitted to EPA by Monday, June 27, 2005, 5:00 PM Eastern Standard Time. Award announcements are expected to be made in early fall 2005. EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no awards.

FULL TEXT OF ANNOUNCEMENT

Section 1: FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

The Development, Community and Environment Division (DCED) in U.S. EPA's Office of Policy Economics and Innovation is issuing this request for initial proposals (RFIP). DCED focuses on growth and development issues of regional and national significance. Through its focus on growth that is protective of the environment, this solicitation supports EPA's strategic objective to sustain, clean up, and restore communities and the ecological systems that support them (Objective 4.2 in EPA's 2003-2008 Strategic Plan). Smart growth development practices support integrated environmental management approaches that both protect local ecosystems and support ecologically compatible development. These practices support national environmental and public health goals by protecting sensitive watersheds, minimizing water quality impacts from development, reducing air emissions by increasing transportation choices, and encouraging cleanup and sustainable redevelopment of Brownfields.

The U.S. EPA is seeking proposals from eligible organizations to develop and convene a prominent annual summit for key public officials and civic or private sector leaders who are noted pioneers in implementing the principles of smart growth. The summit is intended to draw together local, regional, and/or state officials and other individuals who are widely acknowledged for their leadership in smart growth. This event will provide an opportunity for these leaders to exchange ideas about minimizing environmental impacts of development through innovative initiatives, to meet with national smart growth experts that they may not have access to otherwise, and to learn about local, state or federal sources of funding that may be available to support their further implementation of the principles of smart growth.

Summit participants should have a demonstrated track record at successfully redeveloping brownfields or other infill sites, creating more compact development with greater housing and transportation choices, and establishing fair and predictable development processes that include extensive public participation. They should have a demonstrated involvement in smart growth, exhibit an ongoing commitment to address development-related challenges, and illustrate strong public participation in resolving these challenges.

The Smart Growth Leadership Summit is intended to be a prominent, annual, invitation-only event in Washington, DC at which recognized local, regional, and/or state leaders convene for one to two days to share their innovations in implementing principles of smart growth, work directly with outside experts on priority development challenges, and learn about local, state or federal sources of funding that may support their ongoing commitment to smart growth.

Core Minimums for Year One Proposals

Core minimums are basic requirements for all proposals. Proposals that do not include these elements will receive lower scores in the evaluation process, unless each change is fully justified in the application.

Those proposals that include these minimum requirements and leverage additions to each item may score higher in the evaluation process. See evaluation criteria for additional information.

The minimum proposal should include the components described below.

1. Summit Participants

- Number of Participants: Summit should serve a minimum of 40 leaders from communities or states excelling in the implementation of the principles of smart growth. A range of 40-60 participants per year is suggested. Applicants suggesting larger or smaller summits should provide justification.
- Participant Selection: Proposals should address how participants will be selected. Participants should have 1) a demonstrated track record of successfully implementing principles of smart growth at the local, regional or state levels, 2) examples that illustrate that they continue to be actively engaged in these issues, and 3) success in stimulating broad-based community participation. Communities with committed political leadership and concrete steps in implementing smart growth principles will likely have the best chance of additional success through the support provided by the summit in this cooperative agreement. Community leaders may be selected through existing national recognition programs, such as, but not limited to, Smart Growth Leadership Institute Pilot Communities, EPA's National Award for Smart Growth Achievement winners, Congress for the New Urbanism Charter Awards, American Planning Association's National Award for Planning, National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Preservation Awards, American Institute of Architect's Regional Urban Design Assistance Team and Sustainable Design Assessment Team recipient communities, and EPA's Smart Growth Implementation Assistance recipients and Smart Growth - Brownfields grant recipients, or other recognized award programs. Proposals should identify what criteria will be used to select summit participants. Detailed background information on the selection criteria should be included in an appendix. If specific award programs are used to identify summit participants, background on the selection criteria applied by each of the award programs should be included in the appendix.
- Steering Committee: Proposals should address how a steering committee representing a core group of this leadership may be convened to help create participant selection criteria and attract recognized smart growth leaders to attend the summit. Proposals may suggest a different mechanism for this type of input and leadership participation. Any such committee or input process should be explained and justified in the proposal.

2. Scope and Development of Summit Agenda

- Primary Agenda Issues: Agenda should address at minimum three primary issues for summit participants: sharing of best practices from select (2-3) communities applying innovative initiatives to support smart growth; introduction of experts to present leading innovations and ideas that support the principles of smart growth; and, information about opportunities in federal, state, and/or local funding for participants and their jurisdictions to receive continued support for their smart growth initiatives.
- Sharing of Best Practices: The sharing of best practices, at a minimum, should present 2-3 examples of excellent implementation of the principles of smart growth that are most relevant to the summit participants. Proposals must describe the process to select the most relevant topics. Topics to be considered might include, but are not limited to, zoning/codes, transportation regulations and policy, stormwater regulation, public participation, transit-oriented development, brownfields reuse, coalition building, and public education and outreach. Proposals should justify which topics will be selected and how they will be addressed in the agenda, or explain how topics will be selected through input from the summit participants.

- Expert Exchange: At a minimum, proposals should address how a panel of 2-3 outside experts who are leaders in the topic areas selected for the best practices discussion will be identified, how they will be incorporated into the agenda, and how their expertise will be shared with summit participants.
- Opportunities in Funding: At a minimum, applicants should indicate how they will present both written documentation and an agenda session to summit participants about available funding from federal, state and/or local sources to provide continued support for the implementation of smart growth principles. Minimum requirements for the documentation are explained below in the "Materials for Summit Participants" section. Agenda presentations should focus on funding opportunities that will support community work on the topics selected for the initial discussion of best practices. Proposals should address how this information will be presented to the summit participants.
- Steering Committee: Proposals should address how a steering committee of select local, regional or state leaders participating in the summit, or some other mechanism, will help develop and vet an agenda.

3. Materials for Summit Participants

- Existing Published Materials: At a minimum, participants should receive background materials on the 2-3 topics selected for the summit. Proposals should address how these materials will be provided and how they will be selected. Use of already published materials is encouraged.
- Document on Funding Sources: A document presenting information on available sources of funding should be provided to participants. This document should include, at a minimum, a brief description of each funding source, contact information, and applicability to selected summit topics. Proposals should include an appendix that contains a general outline of this document and information regarding how the information will be collected. The document may expand on existing funding source documents or update existing materials about funding for the implementation of smart growth principles.

EPA expects to have substantial involvement in helping to develop the workshop, agenda, materials, and follow-up activities conducted under this cooperative agreement.

Subsequent Years

EPA expects to award a five year cooperative agreement through this solicitation. Proposals should address details about future annual summits, what changes might take place, other selected topics to be addressed in future agendas, and how summit participants from one year will be involved in future summits. Plans to maintain or expand the number of participants should be discussed. A justification of how participants will be selected in subsequent years should be included. This may include some previous participants as well as new leaders in the implementation of the principles of smart growth.

Applicants are encouraged to propose establishing informal peer networks that would enable summit participants to continue to share information with each other throughout the year. This may include, but is not limited to, low-cost online or email options such as a listserv. Proposals should justify how this will be done, why it is the best means for establishing and strengthening a peer network of leaders, and discuss how this network will be managed.

Outputs and Outcomes:

Successful applicants must demonstrate expertise in smart growth and experience working collaboratively to find common ground on growth and development issues. Smart growth is development that serves the economy, the community, public health, and the environment. It is characterized by a common set of development principles:

- mix land uses;
- take advantage of compact building design;
- create a range of housing opportunities and choices;
- create walkable neighborhoods;
- foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place;
- preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas;
- strengthen and direct development towards existing communities;
- provide a variety of transportation choices;
- make development decisions predictable, fair and cost-effective;
- encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.

Expected outputs from this assistance agreement may include, but are not limited to, annual products such as:

- Best practices case studies for workshop materials
- Workshop proceedings
- Workshop presentations available online for public use
- Materials on state, federal and private funding sources that support smart growth

Expected outcomes from these annual summits, and the network of communities that results, may include support for more environmentally friendly development to an expanding network of local communities; reduced impacts of development on air and water quality in those communities adopting smart growth policies; more efficient use of infill lands within these communities; more brownfields redeveloped; and greater protection of sensitive open spaces in communities promoting more compact development patterns.

Section 2: AWARD INFORMATION

U.S. EPA expects to award one assistance agreement under this solicitation. The Agency expects to have approximately \$20,000 available for first year funding, with a ceiling of \$120,000 for the life of the agreement. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit proposals for first year activities of \$20,000 or less; first year activities should include actual planning and convening of a summit. Final agreement may be negotiated for up to five (5) years, allowing for annual incremental funding of follow-up summits and activities. No multi-year proposals should be for more than \$20,000 in the first year or less than \$105,000 over the life of the project. Funding for future years will depend upon the availability of funds, EPA priorities, and recipient performance. The award will be made as a cooperative agreement, which entails substantive involvement by EPA. This will include working in partnership with the recipient to develop summit agendas, materials, and follow-up activities. Applicants should provide detailed descriptions of the activities proposed for the first-year under this competition, as well as a description of what follow-up activities would be conducted in subsequent years if additional funding is made available.

The expected time span for any cooperative agreements awarded under this RFIP will be from Fall 2005 through Summer 2010. EPA reserves the discretion to select additional potential awardees from this solicitation for funding that may not occur until Fiscal Year 06. Applications for renewal or supplementation of existing projects are eligible to compete with applications for new awards.

Section 3: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Section 3.1: ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants include (1) Incorporated nonprofit (or not-for-profit) agencies, institutions, and organizations incorporated or domiciled in the United States, (2) public (tribal, state, county, regional or local) agencies, institutions and organizations, and (3) individuals. Individuals must demonstrate the

same level of competence and meet the same requirements as any other eligible applicant. Applicants must be located in, and project activities must be conducted within, the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or a territory or possession of the United States. Nonprofit organizations described in section 501 (c) (4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply. For profit organizations also are not eligible to apply. Please see section 4.5 for information on eligible activities and costs. Applications from ineligible applicants will not be considered.

Section 3.2: COST-SHARING OR MATCHING

There are no match or cost-sharing requirements. However, the degree to which the project budget effectively uses EPA funds and leverages matching funds will be considered as evaluation criteria. Matching funds can include cash or in-kind contributions. Any dollars counted towards a formal match must be for costs that U.S. EPA can fund. Allowable costs for nonprofit organizations are defined in OMB circular A-122; allowable costs for public entities are defined in OMB circular A-87. Applicants proposing to use matching funds should document when the funds will be available and who/where they are from (see Section 4.2, "confirmation of partner participation and/or match").

Section 3.3: OTHER

Only one application will be accepted per applicant. To be eligible, applicants will need to meet all of the following threshold criteria. Threshold criteria will be applied on a pass/fail basis. Failure to meet any of them will render an application ineligible; ineligible applications will not be reviewed.

U.S. EPA will use the smart growth definition outlined in Section 1 ("Funding Opportunity Description ") to apply Threshold Criteria 1 and 2.

Threshold Criterion 1: Smart Growth Focus

The proposal must focus directly on the issues, subjects, and activities targeted by this RFIP and explained under the section entitled "Funding Opportunity Description." The proposal must embody, result in, or encourage development reflecting the principles of smart growth. It also must support EPA's strategic objective to sustain, clean up, and restore communities and the ecological systems that support them.

Threshold Criterion 2: Smart Growth Expertise and Commitment

The applicant must demonstrate a comprehensive, in-depth understanding of the smart growth issues addressed by the project. Applicants must clearly demonstrate both expertise in smart growth issues and commitment to the principles of smart growth.

Threshold Criterion 3: Allowable Activities

The proposal must consist of activities authorized under one or more of the following U.S. EPA grant authorities: Clean Air Act section 103 (b) (3); Clean Water Act section 104 (b) (3); Solid Waste Disposal Act section 8001, as amended; Toxic Substances Control Act section 10; Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act section 20, as supplemented by P.L. 106-74; and Safe Drinking Water Act sections 1442 (a) and (c). Most of these statutes authorize grants for research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys and studies. The project activities must advance the state of knowledge or transfer information. The term "demonstrations" can encompass the first instance of a pollution control or prevention technique, or an innovative application of a previously used method. The term "research" may include the application of established practices when they contribute to learning about an environmental concept or problem.

Threshold Criterion 4: Environmental Focus

The project's general focus must be one that is specified in the statutes listed above under threshold criterion 3. For most statutes the project must address the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of air, water, or solid/hazardous waste pollution. In the case of grants under

the Toxic Substances Control Act or the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act, the project must "(carry) out the purposes of the Act." The overarching focus must be on the statutory purpose of the applicable grant authorities, which in most cases is "to prevent or control pollution." In light of this, proposals relating to topics which are sometimes included within the term "environment" such as recreation, conservation, restoration, or habitat protection must describe the relationship of these topics to the statutorily required purpose of pollution prevention and/or control.

Threshold Criterion 5: Serve a Public Purpose

Proposals must clearly demonstrate how the proposed activities will (1) be of primary benefit to the applicant organization (i.e. support their overall mission and goals), and (2) serve a non-federal audience.

Threshold Criterion 6: Complete Applications That Are Submitted on Time

To be eligible, applications must comply with the mandatory provisions outlined in sections 4.2 and 4.3.

Section 4: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Section 4.1: HOW TO GET APPLICATION MATERIALS

This announcement provides all of the instructions needed for preparing an initial proposal. There are no required, standardized federal application forms or kits to be used at this stage since these are initial proposals, not formal applications for assistance. However, there are format and content requirements which are described below under section 4.2, "Content and Form of Application Submission." Paper copies of this announcement can be obtained by contacting the EPA personnel listed in section 7. Electronic copies will be available on the DCED web site (www.epa.gov/smartgrowth).

Section 4.2: CONTENT AND FORM OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION

To be considered complete and eligible for review, all proposals must include a cover letter, summary information page, project description, budget and budget narrative, documentation of programmatic capability and smart growth expertise, confirmation of partner participation and/or match (if applicable), and description of related funding. Proposals should not exceed 10 pages (see below for additional details). The following format is required for all proposals:

Cover letter (does not count against page limit)

The cover letter that accompanies your proposal must be signed by an official with the authority to commit your organization to the project and should be written on your organization's official letterhead.

Summary information page (does not count against page limit)

The summary information page should be one-page long and include the following information:

- the title and number of this request for initial proposals (USEPA-AO-OPEI-05-03)
- project title and location
- applicant name, address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address
- name and title of project contact (including how to reach if different from above)
- type of applicant organization (e.g., nonprofit, local government, state government, etc.)
- how you first learned of this RFIP (e.g., reviewing www.fedgrants.gov, colleague referral, other online source, etc.)

--summary budget information (amount requested from U.S. EPA; amount and source of any matching funds)

-- 5 to 10 line abstract of the proposal

Project description (no longer than 10 page sides)

The project description must provide a concise overview of the project and a preliminary workplan outlining all major tasks, products, timetables and expected outcomes (including environmental results). The narrative must address how the proposal meets eligibility, threshold, and selection criteria. The proposal must discuss the Core Minimums for Year One Proposals (Section 1) and provide information regarding subsequent years. If other project partners or funding sources are involved, their role and contribution must be clearly define and documented. In reviewing the project description, reviewers will not consider any pages over the 10 page side limit. Project descriptions must use no smaller than 10 point type, and should have page margins all-around of at least one inch.

Budget and budget narrative (does not count against page limit)

The project budget must include all relevant direct costs (e.g., personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, and contractual). Indirect costs must also be included. Entries under each category must be explained in a budget narrative.

Documentation of programmatic capability and smart growth expertise (does not count against page limit)

The applicant must include short profiles of all principal staff who will have a major role in the project. Where applicable, this includes principal staff from partner organizations. These profiles must specifically address each individual's experience with smart growth issues and their areas of expertise related to the project. Documentation must address how applicant is an appropriate convener for the Summit. Applicants must also include supplementary information documenting their programmatic capability (see Section 5.1). If they have received assistance agreements from EPA or another federal agency in the last 5 years to conduct related projects, they must identify them. They must discuss their performance history, including adverse audit or grants administration findings for the five years preceding application, and provide contacts for EPA to obtain additional information. Applicant must discuss if any existing awards have been placed on cost reimbursement. If applicants have not received federal funding before, they must provide other information that demonstrates their technical ability to apply grant funds. This might include, but is not limited to, programs funded through state grants or foundations.

Confirmation of partner participation and/or match (does not count against page limit)

If applicable, applicants who are partnering with other organizations, agencies or institutions must include a letter from the partner, on partner letterhead, indicating the partner's role in the project. Each partner letter must be signed by an individual with the authority to commit the partner to the project. This is especially important if the partner is contributing funds or in-kind services to the project. Letters confirming partner participation must be included in the initial proposal package and will not be accepted separately. Proposals relying on partner participation which are missing documentation of that participation will be considered ineligible.

If an applicant is planning on awarding EPA funds received under this solicitation to a proposed partner, competitive procurement requirements apply. Proposed partnerships of this kind must identify which eligible organization (defined in Section 3.1) will be the recipient of the assistance agreement, and whether any eligible organization(s) being brought in as a partner will receive subawards, subgrants, or be considered as contractors. Including the name of the organization you intend to partner or contract with in your initial proposal is not sufficient documentation of competition. (see Section 4.5, "Funding Restrictions," for additional information).

Description of related funding (does not count against page limit)

If applicants have already received funding for activities related to the proposal, they must provide a description of the project and explain how EPA funds awarded under this solicitation will complement current or planned activities being supported by other sources, including other EPA programs.

Additional information regarding how applications should be submitted and what will happen following selection

Applicants must submit one original and four copies of their full initial proposal (as defined above). Paper originals and copies are required. E-mail and fax submissions will not be accepted.

Following selection, successful applicants will be required to fill out a more extensive, formal application for federal assistance (which will include standard forms such as the SF 424 and associated documentation and which may include a more detailed project narrative and workplan). These formal application materials should not be submitted unless requested by EPA. Applicants should be aware that there may be a very quick turnaround required (i.e. two to four weeks) if they are asked to submit a formal request for funding assistance.

All assistance agreement recipients must have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number on their formal SF424 applications. A DUNS number can be obtained by calling 1-866-705-5711. A DUNS number is not required for initial proposals.

Section 4.3: SUBMISSION DATES AND TIMES

U.S. EPA must receive proposals by 5:00 PM Eastern Standard Time, Monday, June 27, 2005. No late proposals will be accepted. Postmarks or meter stamps are not sufficient documentation of on-time delivery.

Applicants will not be automatically notified that their proposals were received.

Section 4.4: INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW

All applicants should be aware that formal applications for federal assistance (i.e., SF 424 and associated documentation as described above) may be subject to intergovernmental review under Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." Applicants should contact their state's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for further information. There is a list of these contacts at the following web site: <http://whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html>.

Section 4.5: FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

Subawards/subgrants must be consistent with the definitions of those terms in 40 CFR 30.22(ff) and 40 CFR 31.3 *Subgrant*, as applicable. EPA encourages applicants to compete subgrants; applicants must provide information on the competitive process they will use if they plan to award subgrants. The recipient must administer the assistance agreement, is accountable to EPA for proper expenditure of the funds, and will be the point of contact for the partnership. Subrecipients are accountable to the recipient for proper use of EPA funds.

Applicants may not use EPA funds to make subgrants/subawards to for-profit organizations or consultants but may procure goods or services from such entities by contract. Any contracts for services or products funded with EPA financial assistance (whether awarded to a for profit or non profit organization) must be awarded under the competitive procurement provisions of 40 CFR Part 30 or 40 CFR Part 31, as applicable.

Funding is only available for the activities authorized under one or more of the U.S. EPA grant authorities cited in Section 3.3, threshold criteria 3 and 4 ("allowable activities" and "environmental focus"). Funding will not be permitted for lobbying, entertainment expenses, or other unallowable costs under the OMB circulars. Allowable costs for nonprofit organizations are defined in OMB circular A-122, for public entities in OMB circular A-87, and for universities in OMB circular A-21. Preaward costs and equipment

costs are only allowable with the written consent of EPA.

Any program income generated under assistance agreements awarded under this solicitation must be applied to eligible activities under the award.

Section 4.6. OTHER SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The delivery address for submitting your proposal will vary depending on whether you are mailing your proposal or arranging for hand delivery.

If you are sending your proposal via hand delivery (e.g., UPS, Federal Express, courier or some other means) send it to either:

ILANA PREUSS
Development, Community and
Environment Division
US Environmental Protection Agency
1301 Constitution Avenue, NW
Room 1408
Washington DC 20004
202-566-2862

MEGAN SUSMAN
Development, Community and
Environment Division
US Environmental Protection Agency
1301 Constitution Avenue, NW
Room 1408
Washington DC 20004
202-566-2862

If you are mailing your proposal, send it to either:

ILANA PREUSS
Development, Community and
Environment Division
US Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Mail Code 1807T
Washington DC 20460

MEGAN SUSMAN
Development, Community and
Environment Division
US Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Mail Code 1807T
Washington DC 20460

Please note that there may be substantial delays in conventional mail service to U.S. EPA due to heightened security screening.

Section 5: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Section 5.1: SELECTION CRITERIA

If the proposal meets the eligibility and threshold criteria articulated in Section 3.1 and 3.3 above, it will then be evaluated against the following selection criteria :

1. Degree to which recipient is an appropriate representative to local, regional and state leaders (elected, business, civic) who are implementing the principles of smart growth.
2. Quality of selection criteria and process to identify summit participants to create a diverse pool of participants from across the country. [Modified May 12, 2005, as posted on <http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/grants>]
3. Degree to which applicant demonstrates in depth understanding of the core attributes of smart growth leadership.
4. Degree to which applicant has a demonstrated track record of convening similar audiences or workshops.

5. Degree to which the proposed agenda and agenda development process select the most critical issues and present information in the most successful manner for the selected audience.
6. Degree to which summit materials and their development effectively address the information needs of summit participants.
7. Degree to which plans for subsequent years best leverage participants and results from previous annual leadership summits.
8. Degree to which the project effectively leverages and uses matching funds.
9. Level of programmatic capability.
10. Quality of applicant's plan for measuring progress towards expected outputs and outcomes.
11. Quality of applicant's past performance reporting on project outputs and outcomes.

Proposals will be scored high, medium, or low against each of the evaluation factors using a numerical scale of 1 through 5, with one being low and 5 being high. All factors will be weighted equally.

Level of programmatic capability refers to the technical capabilities of an organization. In assessing this criterion, EPA will consider factors such as past performance completing other projects of similar size, scope and focus (funded with federal or non-federal dollars); organizational capacity and expertise as measured by the qualifications of key personnel and the resources available to the project; demonstrated ability to execute the proposed workplan; history of meeting reporting requirements and submitting acceptable final reports (to federal or non federal funders). In their project descriptions, applicants must describe their programmatic capability. If they have received assistance agreements from EPA or another federal agency in the last 5 years to conduct related projects, they must identify them. They must discuss their performance history, including adverse audit or grants administration findings for the five years preceding application, and provide contacts for EPA to obtain additional information. Applicant must discuss if any existing awards have been placed on cost reimbursement. If applicants have not received federal funding before, they must provide other information that demonstrates their technical ability to apply grant funds. This might include, but is not limited to, programs funded through state grants or foundations.

Criteria regarding planning and reporting expected products and outcomes: these criteria measure the applicant's ability to identify, track, quantify and produce measurable results. In their project descriptions, applicants must discuss their plan for measuring outputs and outcomes and their experience measuring results from comparable projects. In this context, "outputs" are activities, efforts, or work products that (1) will be produced by a specific date and (2) are directly related to an environmental goal or objective. Outputs can be quantitative or qualitative and must be measurable. "Outcomes" are the results of carrying out a project. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related or programmatic, must be quantifiable, and may not be achievable within the project funding period. All outputs and outcomes proposed for a project funded under this RFIP must support EPA's strategic objective to sustain, clean-up and restore communities and the ecological systems that support them.

Section 5.2: REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

EPA will evaluate proposals against each of the selection criteria above based on the information provided in the proposal and related attachments. Factors such as geographic diversity and applicant diversity (i.e., type of organization) may also be considered. To evaluate programmatic and administrative capability, EPA may consider both information from the applicant and other sources, including EPA files.

Section 5.3: ANTICIPATED ANNOUNCEMENT AND AWARD DATES
See section 6.1

Section 6: AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Section 6.1: AWARD NOTICES

Successful applicants will receive an official notice of award from EPA's Grants Administration Division. EPA will announce successful recipients on the U.S. EPA smart growth web site (www.epa.gov/smartgrowth). This information will be posted within 30 days after U.S. EPA's Grant Administration Division issues a written offer of award to the recipient. U.S. EPA anticipates that awards will be announced in early fall 2005.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified via mail or e-mail in late summer 2005. Applicants who do not pass threshold screening will be notified before final award decisions are made. Any disputes regarding funding decisions will be resolved in accordance with the dispute procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be accessed at <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/05-1371.htm>. Further information on the dispute resolution process can be obtained from the contact person listed under Section 7. U.S. EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no awards.

Applicants should be aware that they are not authorized to begin performance on a project until they have received their official award document from the EPA's grant office. No preaward costs may be incurred without the project officer's approval; preaward costs are undertaken at the recipient's risk.

Section 6.2: ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Eligible non-profits may be subject to a pre-award review for administrative capability by EPA's Grants Administration Division and may be required to provide additional documentation of their ability to manage federal assistance funds. All applicants must comply with the standard requirements, terms and conditions of EPA assistance agreements. Funded activities must be allowable under EPA statutory authority (see section 3).

Section 6.3: REPORTING

Recipients will be required to submit quarterly reports detailing their progress towards achieving agreed upon products and outcomes. If their projects involve program income, quarterly reports will be required on how much income has been earned, from what activities, and how it is being spent. Recipients also will have to participate in annual reviews of their projects with their U.S. EPA project officer. This project officer will be designated at the time of award and will work in partnership with the recipient throughout the life of the assistance agreement.

Section 7: AGENCY CONTACTS

If you have questions about this solicitation, please contact either:

ILANA PREUSS
Development, Community and
Environment Division
US Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
MailCode 1807T
Washington DC 20460

MEGAN SUSMAN
Development, Community and
Environment Division
US Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
MailCode 1807T
Washington DC 20460

Phone: 202-566-2853
Email: preuss.ilana@epa.gov

Phone: 202-566-2861
Email: susman.megan@epa.gov

Answers to frequently asked questions will be posted on the U.S. EPA smart growth web site (www.epa.gov/smartgrowth). The only pre-application assistance available under this competition will be related to clarifying the requirements of the RFIP. This assistance does not include helping an applicant evaluate whether their proposed project will score well against the selection criteria.

Section 8: OTHER INFORMATION

Both initial proposals and formal requests for funding are subject to the Freedom of Information Act. This means that anyone can request, and receive, copies of them. In accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicants may claim all or a portion of their application/proposal as confidential business information. EPA will evaluate confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Applicants must clearly mark applications/proposals or portions of applications/proposals they claim as confidential. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204(c)(2) prior to disclosure.